

policy of insurance purchased by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under section 1966 of this title, there shall be contributed from the appropriation made for active duty pay of the uniformed service concerned an amount determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (which shall be the same for all such members) as the share of the cost attributable to provided coverage under this section, less any costs traceable to the extra hazards of such duty in the uniformed services. Any amounts so contributed on behalf of any member shall be collected by the Secretary of the concerned service from such member (by deduction from pay or otherwise) and shall be credited to the appropriation from which such contribution was made in advance on a monthly basis.

“(3) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall determine the premium amounts to be charged for traumatic injury protection coverage provided under this section.

“(4) The premium amounts shall be determined on the basis of sound actuarial principles and shall include an amount necessary to cover the administrative costs to the insurer or insurers providing such insurance.

“(5) Each premium rate for the first policy year shall be continued for subsequent policy years, except that the rate may be adjusted for any such subsequent policy year on the basis of the experience under the policy, as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in advance of that policy year.

“(6) The cost attributable to insuring such member under this section, less the premiums deducted from the pay of the member's uniformed service, shall be paid by the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. This amount shall be paid on a monthly basis, and shall be due within 10 days of the notice provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the Secretary of the concerned uniformed service.

“(7) The Secretary of Defense shall provide the amount of appropriations required to pay expected claims in a policy year, as determined according to sound actuarial principles by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

“(8) The Secretary of Defense shall forward an amount to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that is equivalent to half the anticipated cost of claims for the current fiscal year, upon the effective date of this legislation.

“(f) The Secretary of Defense shall certify whether any member claiming the benefit under this section is eligible.

“(g) Payment for a loss resulting from traumatic injury will not be made if the member dies not more than 7 days after the date of the injury. If the member dies before payment to the member can be made, the payment will be made according to the member's most current beneficiary designation under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, or a by law designation, if applicable.

“(h) Coverage for loss resulting from traumatic injury provided under this section shall cease at midnight on the date of the member's separation from the uniformed service. Payment will not be made for any loss resulting from injury incurred after the date a member is separated from the uniformed services.

“(i) Insurance coverage provided under this section is not convertible to Veterans' Group Life Insurance.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating to section 1980 the following:

“1980A. Traumatic injury protection. ”.

SEC. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by section 1 shall take effect on the first day of the first month beginning more than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. CRAIG (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. SMITH):

S. 807. A bill to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to provide owners of non-Federal lands with a reliable method of receiving compensation for damages resulting from the spread of wildfire from nearby forested National Forest System lands or Bureau of Land Management lands, when those forested Federal lands are not maintained in the forest health status known as condition class 1; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Enhanced Safety from Wildfire Act of 2005. I am joined by my colleagues Mr. CRAPO and Mr. SMITH.

The legislation we are introducing would amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to make it possible for non-federal land owners to receive compensation for a loss of property as a result of wildfire spreading from Federal land that has not been managed as Condition Class 1.

As we all know, in recent years, there has been a significant amount of injury and loss of property resulting from the spread of wildfire from Federal forested lands to non-Federal lands. Recent wildfires on federal forested lands have shown that lands managed under approved forest health management practices are less susceptible to wildfire, or are subjected to less severe wildfire, than similarly forested lands that are not actively managed.

There is a continuing and growing threat to the safety of communities, individuals, homes and other property, and timber on non-Federal lands that adjoin Federal forested lands because of the unnatural accumulation of forest fuels on these Federal lands and the lack of active Federal management of these lands.

The use of approved forest health management practices to create forest fire “buffer zones” between forested Federal lands and adjacent non-Federal lands would reduce the occurrence of wildfires on forested federal lands or, at least, limit their spread to non-Federal lands and the severity of the resulting damage.

This legislation requires the agencies to manage a “buffer zone” on Federal land, greater than 6,400 acres, that is adjacent to non-Federal land. When forested Federal lands adjacent to non-Federal lands are not adequately managed with a “buffer zone” and wildfire occurs, the legislation states the owners of the non-Federal lands are eligible for compensation for damages resulting from the spread of wildfire to their lands. The legislation sets minimum criteria for non-Federal land to be eligible for compensation.

Our federal land management agencies need to take responsibility for the impacts that occur on non-Federal land as a result of a lack of management on federal land. As a society, we have

come to expect that our neighbors take responsibility for their actions and I feel the federal land management agencies should not escape this responsibility either.

In the next few weeks, the weather will heat up, the drought ridden West will become drier, wildfire danger will rise, and I fear we will once again hear reports regarding the loss of property.

I know this legislation may not be the answer to solving our Federal land management problems and I am willing to discuss other options, but I know that until we address the heart of this issue, homes, private land, and communities will continue to be at risk because of poor Federal land management. Being a good neighbor means being responsible for your actions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 808. A bill to encourage energy conservation through bicycling; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise today to introduce the Conserve by Bike Act to promote energy conservation and improve public health. I am pleased to be joined by my colleague from Maine, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, in introducing this measure. This legislation addresses one part of our Nation's energy challenges. Although there is no single solution to solve our energy problems, I believe that every possible approach must be considered.

Our Nation would realize several benefits from the increased use of bicycle transportation, including lessened dependence on foreign oil and prevention of harmful air emissions. Currently, less than one trip in one hundred, .88 percent, is by bicycle. If we can increase cycling use to one and a half trips per hundred, which is less than one bike trip every two weeks for the average person, we will save more than 462 million gallons of gasoline in a year, worth more than \$721 million. That is the equivalent of one full day per year in which the U.S. will not need to import any foreign oil.

In addition to fostering greater energy security, this bill will help mitigate air quality challenges, which can be harmful to public health and the environment. Unlike automotive transportation, bicycling is emission-free.

The Conserve by Bike Act encourages bicycling through two key components: a pilot program and a research project. The Conserve by Bike Pilot Program established by this legislation would be implemented by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Department would fund up to ten pilot projects throughout the country that would utilize education and marketing tools to encourage people to convert some of their car trips to bike trips. Each of these pilot projects must: (1) document project results and energy conserved; (2) facilitate partnerships among stakeholders in two or more of the following fields: transportation, law enforcement, education, public health,